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RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 4291
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RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0764
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 0531
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 0787
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 4492
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 2783
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SUBJECT: UZBEKISTAN: PRESIDENT KARIMOV SIGNS LAW RATIFYING
UN CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION

11. (U) On June 27 the Senate followed the lower chamber (Oliy Majlis) in adopting a law to ratify the UN Convention Against Corruption. President Karimov then signed the law on July 7, completing the Government of Uzbekistan's ratification steps.

The Head of the International Organizations Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Durbek Amanov, told poloff "it was time to join" the convention; he added that this was one of several major international conventions Uzbekistan has signed this year. (Note: Other recent examples include two ILO Conventions and the UN TIP Protocol. End note). Amanov said the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Office of the Prosecutor General are now tasked with developing an action plan. A parliamentary press release stated adopting the convention "will increase the economic attractiveness of the country" for foreign investors.

Comment:

12. (U) This is a positive step in a country that Transparency International rated 175 out of 179 in its most recent annual Corruption Perception Index. Amanov acknowledged that the Government of Uzbekistan hopes the international community will take note of these efforts. While signing the UN Convention will not cure corruption in Uzbekistan overnight, it should help establish institutions and mechanisms - and perhaps ways of thinking among officials - to address corruption over the long-term. The key, as always, will be in implementation.

BUTCHER